Application No.: 09/864,298
Preliminary Amendment
Reply to Office Action dated September 8, 2005
January 9, 2006

<u>REMARKS</u>

By this amendment, claims 1, 6, 11 and 16-23 have been amended. Currently claims 1-23 are pending in the application.

Claims 16-23 were rejected under 35 USC 101 because the Examiner believed that the claimed invention was directed to non-statutory subject matter. By this amendment, claims 16-23 have been amended to recite the statutory subject matter of a computer readable medium. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are now proper and this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-7 and 11-23 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Garfinkle et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,017,157) in view of Takemoto (U.S. Patent No. 6,335,742). Also, claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being obvious over Garfinkle et al. in view of Takemoto as applied to claim 6, and further in view of Tanaka (U.S. Patent No. 4,816,864). These rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the amendments to the claims and the remarks below.

The present invention relates to an image data administration

system and method. In this device, the data of each image is

associated with a particular keyword selected by a customer and

then the image data and the keyword are stored in an image data

administration apparatus. The keywords are determined in

association with the subject in the image or picture for the image

data, such as a name of a person in the image. Then, the customer

may access the image data administration apparatus and search for

the image data associated with a particular keyword. The image

data administration apparatus selects image data associated with

the designated keyword and makes index image data to be displayed

or printed in the form of thumbnail images of the selected images.

Accordingly, the user can easily pick us a desired series of

pictures relating to a particular subject or object from the stored

image data.

The image data administration apparatus also includes a

customer ID processor for receiving a customer ID transmitted from

the terminal equipment of the customer; a customer password memory

for memorizing a customer password with respect to each customer

ID; a publication password memory for memorizing a publication

password with respect to each customer ID; and an access controller for allowing registration, surveying, printing and erasing of image data when the customer password is received, and for allowing only the surveying and printing of the image data when the publication password is received as described on pages 11-12 of the application.

Independent claims 1 and 6 have been amended to include these related features. Specifically, claims 1 and 6 have been amended to recite "a customer ID processor for receiving a customer ID transmitted from the terminal equipment of the customer; a customer password memory for memorizing a customer password with respect to each customer ID; a publication password memory for memorizing a publication password with respect to each customer ID; and an access controller for allowing registration, surveying, printing and erasing of image data when the customer password is received, and for allowing only the surveying and printing of the image data when the publication password is received."

Also, independent claims 11, 16 and 20 have been amended with similar method claim limitations. Specifically, claims 11, 16 and 20 have been amended to recite "memorizing a customer password with

respect to each customer ID; memorizing a publication password with

respect to each customer ID; and controlling access to the image

data to allow registration, surveying, printing and erasing of the

image data when the customer password is received, and to allow

only the surveying and printing of the image data when the

publication password is received."

These features as well as the other aspects of the independent

claims are not shown or suggested by Garfinkle et al., Takemoto and

Tanaka.

Garfinkle discloses a method of processing digital image and

distributing visual prints produces from the digital image.

According to Garfinkle, digital image data taken by scanning a

photographic film or by digital camera are uploaded to an image

server to be stored therein along with associated information

including unique access code, a name, an e-mail address, store

location, scanning location, current date and other desired

information. The access code is associated with each roll of film.

(see lines 1-2 in column 5 of Garfinkle). A photographer can

access the image server to download an image, or order a visual

print or e-mail the image data. The image server is arranged to provide thumbnail image data to the photographer. Further, the method of Garfinkle can provide index print. Garfinkle does not disclose the customer password, publication password and controlling access to the image data as presently claimed.

Takemoto does not make up for the deficiencies in Garfinkle. Takemoto also does not disclose the customer password, publication password and controlling access to the image data as presently claimed.

Further, Tanaka et al. do not make up for the deficiencies in Garfinkle. Tanaka et al. relate to a programmable copy apparatus and do not disclose associating any keyword relative to the image or the customer password, publication password and controlling access to the image data as presently claimed.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-23 are patentable over Garfinkle, Takemoto, Tanaka et al. and the other prior art of record.
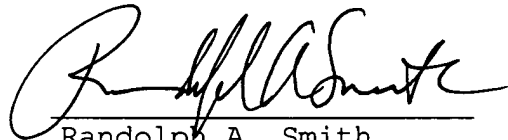
Applicant therefore respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance and an action to this effect is

Application No.: 09/864,298
Preliminary Amendment
Reply to Office Action dated September 8, 2005
January 9, 2006

respectfully requested.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding the claim amendments or these remarks, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: January 9, 2006

Randolph A. Smith
Reg. No. 32,548

SMITH PATENT OFFICE
1901 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Suite 901
Washington, DC 20006-3433
(202) 530-5900 (phone)
(202) 530-5902 (fax)
Usami010906